

Mark - Chapter 00-09

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Mark Prologue

Mark Prologue

Hello.

Thank you for always using our site.

To greet the new year, we are proceeding with an event aimed towards our current readers.

In preparation for the event, we have arranged a survey to hear the opinions of our readers.

It would be most appreciated if you answered honestly.

- 1)What is your favourite genre?
- 1.Fantasy 2.Martial Art 3.Other() The next question applies to those who selected number 1 from question 1).
- 1-1)What is the occupation you prefer for a protagonist?
- 1.Knight 2.Magician 3.Other()
- 1-2)What is the life history you prefer for that protagonist?
- 1.Royalty 2.Aristocrat 3.Child of a Wealthy Merchant 4.Child of a Peasant 5.Orphan 1-3)What is the story you prefer?
- 1.Defeating the Demon King and saving the world.
- 2.Marrying a princess and living happily ever after.
- 3.Fighting against the strong and becoming the most powerful of them all.
- 4.Living an ordinary daily life.
- .
- .
- .
- 8.Other()
- 1-4) If you could enter into a fantasy world: 1.Enter 2.Don't Enter
- The next question applies to those who selected 2 from question 1).
- 2-1)What is the occupation...

- .
- .
- .
- .

Thank you for participating in our survey.

Author: Lee Gyung Hoon.

Mark Chapter 1

Mark Chapter 1: Mark

Editor/PR – Kidyeon

Translator – Mr Oranges

“Ugh.”

“Wake up. Mark!”

Mark woke up from the sudden pain on his chest. Tightly frowning, he stared through sleepy eyes at the person who had hit him. He tried to figure out who it was when he felt another flash of pain from his gut.

“What are you looking at instead of getting up when I say?”

Hearing those words, Mark got to his feet while clutching his stomach. Finally, his vision cleared. Looking around him, he saw they were in a fairly narrow alleyway.

“Hey, Mark. How do you manage to sleep without paying your dues?”

Because the speaker was a tall male, Mark had no choice but to look up. That person had light brown hair that fell to his shoulders, which looked oily as if it hadn’t been washed for days. Although dirty, the clothes he wore had traces of being cleaned. But even so, it looked closer to rags than clothing.

Mark remembered that this person’s name was George.

“Why aren’t you replying? Do you need a beating?”

“Argh...”

George hit Mark on the left cheek with his fist. The sudden pain made Mark dizzy.

“Hah, this kid. He still doesn’t talk. Did you lose your tongue to Jax on the way?”

Mark thought that he needed to say something to avoid more blows. What was certain was that words would definitely help.

“No.”

Perhaps George was satisfied with first reply in a while. The fists no longer came. But the questions continued instead.

“Right. So why haven’t you paid the money?”

“That’s...”

“Don’t even think about lying. Dale saw you going to Hall’s shop and turning over an item for money.”

Mark turned his head towards where George indicated with a nod. Over there were a bunch of children who were crouched down. Mark tried searching out the child called Dale, but he couldn’t before another wave of pain had hit him.

“Aargh...”

“Listen well, Mark.”

George was talking while grasping Mark by the hair.

“Have I ever hit anyone when they’ve paid their dues? Oi, have I?”

George was looking at the group of children while speaking.

“No.”

A few of the children had replied.

“Mark. Aren’t you going to reply?”

Mark was hit on the cheek again.

“No. Not at all.”

“Then why have you missed out on the payments from last week. Did you forget being beat up after that?”

“No. No.”

He had to reply to avoid being hit. He needed to give the answers George wanted to hear.

“Actually...”

“Actually, what?”

“Actually...I went to visit old man Cain.”

“You...didn’t I say not to go? You went to see that crazy old man?”

“Yes. I’m sorry.”

George released his hold on Mark and grabbed his own head, letting out a cry of frustration. He then whipped his head around towards the other children.

“Hey. Jill!”

“Yes, George.”

Among the group of children, a scruffy looking child stood up. George looked satisfied that Jill had replied and stood.

“This all happened because you went to see that old man. Tell us about it.”

“Wh-, about what?”

George burst into a shout. He yelled at least once out of three times.

“Tell us about the time you went to visit the old man. You must have learned something. Learned something by giving him money instead of me.”

Jill recounted her story whilst stammering.

“At first, tha-, that old man came near and told me he’d teach me magic. He said he’d teach magic if I gave him 5 coppers...that’s why.”

“Right. So show us the magic the old man taught you. Let’s see what magic worth 5 coppers is like.”

Jill spoke in an embarrassed way.

“The, the mana-.”

“No no. Together with the motions!”.

Jill raised her arms with her left hand outstretched forwards while she made motions with her right hand in the air.

“The, the mana dwelling within me, respond to my calling and de-, destroy my enemy with the force of a hammer, faster than wind, Magic Arrow!”

“Ahahahahaha!”

George exploded with laughter. Then as if having never laughed, he stopped and stared at Mark.

“Mark.”

“Yes.”

“Did you learn that spell as well? The same spell as Jill learned I mean.”

“Yes...”

“This retarded kid!”

George suddenly kicked Mark on the chest. Mark couldn't stay standing, and when he fell over, he was repeatedly kicked in the stomach.

“Retard! Retard!”

With every word, George added in another kick. Mark curled up his body and covered his stomach with his hands. Perhaps out of exhaustion, George stopped and spoke again.

“Mark. Never go to that old man again. Understood?”

“Yes.”

Fearing more kicks, Mark quickly replied. After hearing the reply, George picked up the box with all the extorted money, and swaggered out of the alley. The other children chased after George's figure. But when George turned the alley and disappeared, while some of the children followed outside, others scattered and crouched in the corners. One of them came closer to Mark.

“Mark.”

“Jill.”

“Are you okay?”

“Not really...”

He spoke while standing up. He ached all over. Jill was making a worried expression.

“Your face is a little swollen, but otherwise alright. How's your stomach?”

“It hurts.”

Mark replied with a grimace. He could no longer stand, so sat instead.

“I’ll get you some water.”

Jill picked up the large bowl in a corner and left the alley.

Mark was leaning against the wall, and thought about something. He was definitely Mark. But at the same time, he was Suho. Suho was reading a fantasy novel, as per usual, until he fell asleep. Nothing was out of the ordinary.

He recalled that back then, there was a linked questionnaire at the site he frequented. It was a survey from a novel publishing site. Normally he wouldn’t have even looked at it, but for some reason he had participated until the end.

The contents of that survey bothered him after all. He remembered a part questioning whether you would cross over into a fantasy world if you could. He had probably answered yes. It was because it was something he considered often in his daily life.

He strained to remember more of the survey. One thing was certain: In the life history part, he had checked the orphan route. In most of the novels he had read, he felt that everyone apart from the protagonist were mere hindrances. That was why he favored a story about an orphan without a hometown. Who would have thought it would have come back to bite him this way.

He remembered a few more things. Between martial arts and fantasy, he had chosen fantasy as his favourite. And because Suho thought the focus of fantasy was magic, he had chosen his occupation as a magician. As to the specific story he had chosen, he couldn’t remember.

He vaguely remembered something about saving the princess and defeating the demon king. Because that part had so many options, he couldn’t really remember what he had chosen. If by chance he had chosen the demon king route, it would be a disaster. This situation he was in was definitely brought about by that survey.

That spells, and even magic existed, must be true. This world was no doubt a fantasy world.

If he really had to defeat the demon king, would accomplishing that mission be the only way back to his original world? This was the fantasy he had so wanted

to come to, but already he wished to go back. It was different from his expectations.

For the time being, he had to survive. He remembered about Mark. Mark was an orphan. His age was about 11, but not exactly sure of it. He didn't know when it began, but he had been living around the alleys, panhandling for money. And that was how he ended up entering George's gang.

Actually, he was just sleeping in one alley, but that place happened to be George's territory, so he was half-forced to enter the gang. Then he remembered what happened before that. He had heard from Jill about old man Cain, and went looking for him. It was a week ago.

The old man said he would make Mark a magician in return for 5 coppers. So he gathered 1 copper a day before going back to learn a spell. But what he had learnt was only the spell. He didn't get to learn the hand movements like Jill did.

Just then, Jill returned with the large bowl in her hands.

"I took a while because there was a line at the well."

Jill pushed the bowl towards Mark. He took it and gulped down the water. There must have been more than he thought, because he put it down after drinking about half. Jill took the bowl and took one mouthful before putting it down again.

"Jill. Can you show me what you did before? That magic arrow."

"Even you're going on about that!"

Mark spoke to calm Jill down.

"No, I'm not making fun of you. I just didn't get to learn the hand movements in my case."

When Jill pointedly stared at him, Mark made a serious expression.

"Why ask at all. It's probably all nonsense anyway."

"We paid 5 coppers, so you never know."

Jill snorted.

"Hrmph. I've been doing it an entire week but it didn't work. It's nonsense!"

“Just teach me anyway. I want to try it as well.”

Mark kept on persuading her. In a few moments, Jill, seemingly unable to stand against his pleas, stood up. Mark stood as well.

“It’s embarrassing to do it here so let’s go outside.”

“Everyone saw it already though.”

“I won’t teach you then!”

Mark winced and shut his mouth, and followed Jill out of the alley. While walking behind Jill he thought to himself. He had been practicing the spell he learnt from the old man, all day long. But it never worked well. Back then he thought it was nonsense as well. The 5 coppers had felt wasted.

But after recalling the memories of his time as Suho, he became certain. This body of his had talent in magic. If the contents of that survey was true, then seeing as he selected the occupation of magician, he must have some talent in magic. To confirm this, he was trying to learn the hand movements from Jill.

Mark was sure that in order to activate the spell, the incantation and hand movements must be done together. Just when he thought this in his mind while walking, Jill stopped moving.

“No one should see if it’s here.”

Looking around him, Mark saw that they were nearby a fence in a corner of the village. Just in case Jill might run away due to embarrassment, Mark went ahead and recited the spell.

“The mana dwelling within me, respond to my calling and destroy my enemy with the force of a hammer, faster than wind. This is it, right? Tell me if it’s different from how you learned it.”

Seeing Mark act enthusiastically and reciting the spell, Jill laughed and spoke.

“That’s right. But it’s a little different. You’re pronouncing mana wrongly. Arrows was said wrong as well.”

Jill fixed his way of reciting the spell. The way she spoke was much more dynamic. Her tone was as if acting.

“When I was learning it, the old man taught it to me in a voice like he was dying. To be honest I thought to take back the 5 coppers after hearing the spell. He looked as if on the verge of death.”

Mark thought maybe the old man had actually been beaten by somebody into that state. Perhaps it wasn't that he didn't want to teach the hand movements, but just didn't have the strength to raise his arms.

“Anyway, since I'll teach you now, make sure to follow it properly.”

Mark put a lot of effort into doing as Jill said. After 5 minutes of practicing the incantation, Jill began teaching the hand movements.

“Fully stretch out your left arm, then stretch out only your thumb while the rest of the fingers are curled into a fist.”

Jill stretched out her left arm and with her right hand made quick movements. It looked complicated as her right arm swished through the air while her fingers closed and opened.

“Show me a little slower.”

Jill didn't seem to dislike being asked, as she laughed and complied. The movements of her right arm and fingers felt like an authentic magicians. Jill slowly showed the five or six stages of movements. After carefully observing it all, Mark tried copying the movements.

Jill made a surprised expression.

“You're really good at it.”

“From my point of view, I think you're better than me?”

“In my case I've practiced about three days.”

Seeing him do it so easily, Jill looked a little moody.

Mark tried doing the right hand movements with his left hand as well. He managed to carry it out exactly the same as the right hand. He suddenly he was quite clever.

When he was still Suho, he wasn't capable of drawing a triangle with his left hand while at the same time drawing a square with his right hand. Even when he

tried learning more about the little bit of sign language he had picked up from volunteering, he gave up quickly. Mark was clearly much more clever and talented than when he was Suho.

“Are you happy now? When you become a magician in the future, you can’t forget the service I’ve done you. I’m your mentor.”

“I got it. Haha.”

Jill asked Mark to try it once, but he replied he would show her after perfecting it. Since it was late, Mark suggested going back.

On the way back, he thought to himself that he would sneak out at night to test his magic.

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Mark Chapter 2

Mark Chapter 2: Magic Arrow

Editor/PR – Kidyeon

Translator – Mr Oranges

Mark got ready to go out panhandling. After that, he would usually run errands for a chance at extra money. He walked while refreshing his memories. There were several shops in this village. Madam Kate's small inn and old man Roland's tool shop, and a leather shop run by the red-bearded Robert.

To be frank, apart from the leather shop, the rest were all poorly run. There was also a self-proclaimed firewood shop run by Hall. That place sold the firewood piled at a corner outside their house, but apart from the Madam Kate, who regularly needed fires, there weren't many customers to speak of.

At the very least, Mark didn't think that place was a proper shop. But still, since he didn't know much apart from panhandling and gathering twigs, he visited that place often for work. Even now he was heading towards Hall's place.

"Mark. Come over here."

On the passing street, someone called out to Mark. When he looked around to see who it was, he saw Robert. Robert was a man who was in his forties, growing a red beard. But he didn't like it when he was called an uncle. He wanted to normally be called a mister. The person himself said it was because he was yet to be married, but Mark thought regardless, if you were forty years old, you were an uncle.

"What is it?"

"When I say come, you should just come without asking"

Robert laughed humorously while beckoning with a finger. Most of the villagers disliked the children on the streets, because they were dirty. Even so, because it was a small village, everyone knew each other by face and the children would occasionally be given errands to run in exchange for food or some copper. The villagers didn't want to see corpses turning up in their village either.

Robert didn't really hate the street children. To be exact, he wasn't really interested in them. But he was much better than the hooligan Jax who would beat someone just for passing by.

From time to time, Robert would call one of the children and give him work for some copper. There were times when the work he gave wasn't proportionate to the copper he gave, and if the work wasn't done properly he would give only half the promised copper.

If a child was unlucky, he would be given a half eaten piece of bread. But some children liked it, saying it was better than dark bread.

Ron, from George's gang, claimed that he would learn to tan leather and chased after Robert, so Robert often gave errands for Ron to do. But as a result of moving about so much, Ron lost his eyesight the last month when he was noticed and beaten up by Jax, and he couldn't go around begging for money anymore.

Because Ron was deemed just another mouth to feed, he died while being beaten every day without rest by George. He was buried in the back of the mountains.

"You're free right?"

"I'm busy."

"What do you mean busy. I'll give you 3 copper so run me an errand."

"What is it?"

For now, Mark decided to hear him out. The quota demanded by George was 3 copper, so doing this job would free him of that worry.

"It's not much. Go to the mountains and pick me some Phyllis."

The work given time to time to the children must have been this. But Mark had heard there wasn't many who properly received their copper after doing this work.

"What's Phyllis?"

As if waiting for those words, Robert drew back into his shop. Soon after, he came out holding a slightly large leaf in one hand. Apart from its green color,

nothing special could be discerned. In his other hand was a linen pouch roughly the size of Mark.

“This is it. This leaf is called Phyllis, and I need it for tanning leather. You just need to fill up this pouch with the leaves and come back.”

“I’m not doing it. Who would do such bothersome work for 3 copper?”

“Haha. Then how about this. Actually, Phyllis isn’t easy to differentiate without an eye for it. Among your gang members, there was none who could properly gather only Phyllis. That’s why I first offered 3 copper. It’s obvious you would bring back all sorts of other leaves with you. But if you can bring back the pouch full of only Phyllis leaves, I’ll give you 10 copper. How about it?”

“What if other leaves were mixed in?”

“Then it’d be your fault so I won’t give you the copper.”

“Show me that for a bit.”

Mark decided to have a look at the leaf first. He thought there must have been some noticeable difference.

“Righto.”

Robert chuckled as he handed over the leaf. Mark took it in his hands and looked over it all over. The leaf was a light green color, with rough and uneven edges. He paid closer attention to its shape.

“If you look closely the leaf is split into 5 parts. Are all Phyllis leaves like this?”

“That’s right. That’s the leaf characteristics. Will you do it or not? If not, I’ll just ask Jimmy over there who’s passing by.”

Turning his head back, Mark saw Jimmy from George’s gang staring over at him.

“I’ll do it. Give me the pouch.”

“Alright.”

Taking the pouch, Mark glanced at Jimmy. Jimmy had already turned away and was going up another path.

“You owe me 10 copper if I bring the pouch full of Phyllis leaves. If you don’t,

I'll set fire to the shop and run away."

"Don't worry about it. When have I gone back on my word?"

"I've heard you've done it plenty."

"That's because none of the kids did their work properly. I can give the copper only when they perform well."

Robert grinned while laughing. Mark found it suspicious, but if he did it well it would get him 10 copper. With 10 copper, he wouldn't have to work for 3 days. Putting aside the problem of food, he needed time to practice magic.

Mark followed the path out of the village, going into the mountainside. He could see several traps laid out by the villagers. There was a time before when Jimmy was caught trying to steal a rabbit from one of the traps and half beaten to death. After all, it was easy to get caught doing such things, since the village was small, and the street children would be the first to be blamed.

Mark climbed up the mountain a fair bit before stopping and looking around the nearby shrubs. The reason he had agreed to this errand was because he was confident. Searching for the same looking leaf was easy in itself, and back when he had closely examined the Phyllis leaf, he noticed a strange smell from it. If he couldn't find them by appearance, he would search by smell.

Mark picked a leaf from one tree and checked it. If it wasn't the right one he would throw it away. A lot of the leaves he picked looked similar, but they weren't Phyllis leaves. But eventually he came across one that looked right. The shape was similar, and so was the size. He gave it a sniff, and was certain it was Phyllis.

He picked the leaves from that tree and put them all into the pouch. The smaller leaves were left out, just in case Robert would point them out. He then paid close attention to how that Phyllis tree looked like. Soon he could tell apart the difference between regular trees and Phyllis trees. The other trees looked to be about 10 feet tall, but the Phyllis trees were only about 7 feet.

To make sure if it was just this tree that was small, or if it was really a characteristic of Phyllis trees, he began searching for others. It wasn't long before he easily found another one. He became certain that Phyllis trees were

indeed around 7 feet tall. And like that, it was only 2 hours after he left the village before the pouch was full. But he had no intention of going back so soon.

Mark wanted to practice the magic right then, which he was planning to do at night. Since it would be impossible to do in the village, he was intending to practice magic after finishing panhandling and sneaking out of the village. But seeing as he was out here anywhere, he decided why not then.

First was to bring up the image of the magic he wanted to use. Next was to chant the spell while making the motions. Finally, was to shout out the name of the magic. This was the order he remembered.

Mark had never seen magic arrows used in front of himself before. But Suho had seen it before, in movies and games. If this was really a fantasy world, then the knowledge Suho had known would apply here.

He imagined a magic arrow forming in his hands and shooting forth. Then he chanted the words for the spell while making the hand motions.

“The mana dwelling within me, respond to my calling and destroy my enemy with the force of a hammer, faster than wind. Magic Arrow!”

He felt something. It was right at the moment he began incanting the spell, that a change occurred in his body. When he yelled out the name of the magic, an arrow shaped object burst forwards out of his left hand. The magic arrow crashed into the tree in front of him and disappeared.

Mark approached the tree to examine the spot of impact. It was slight, but there was a small dent. At the very least, it seemed stronger than what his fist could do.

In the midst of happiness, he was considering something else.

He had thought that the magic arrow would fly out of his left hand into the direction he was aiming to. That was why he had intentionally stretched out his left arm towards the tree. But the result was that the actual point of impact was slightly different to where he intended. So he decided to try it once again. This time he pointed his left arm at a completely different tree as he chanted the spell.

“The mana dwelling within me, respond to my calling and destroy my enemy

with the force of a hammer, faster than wind! Magic Arrow!”

The magic arrow formed and burst forth. The spell hit the tree he intended to hit again. His line of thinking was correct. The aim of his hand and the direction of the spell had no relation to each other. The spell would fire towards only the place imagined by the caster.

But still he decided to aim his hand towards his target. It was much easier to create an image in his mind. And if the target was to dodge, he could change the direction of the spell using the aim of his hand. He thought this needed practice.

Mark collapsed beneath that practice tree. It was probably that he was tired from using magic arrow twice. There were many things he wanted to test, but he needed to be patient. Using up all his mana might have made him unconscious. At least, that’s how it was according to Suho’s limited memories.

It was important to check how much mana he had, but it couldn’t be today. If he passed out and didn’t wake until night, Robert might not give him his copper saying he was too late.

The trees were dense in the area Mark was in, so the direction of the sun was hard to find. But it hadn’t been 3 hours since he left the village in the morning and entered the forest. He thought that it must roughly be noon now. He decided to return now. It was time to get those copper and return to this forest.

Mark left the forest and got back into the village, and headed towards Robert’s shop. The door was open so he simply entered. The smell of glaze used in tanning leather poked at his nose.

Robert was sitting at the counter.

“You’re late. I would have thought you’d be back in 1 hour.”

Robert looked a little annoyed, so Mark quickly spread out the pouch full of leaves.

“I was late picking out just the Phyllis leaves. Here, look.”

Robert got out from behind the counter and further spread out the contents of the pouch. After looking through the topmost leaves for a moment, he went into the backroom of the shop. Not long after, Robert came back out holding a

roll of linen, which he spread out on the floor. He overturned the pouch onto the linen.

“Hmm...”

Robert carefully looked at the spread out contents of the pouch. It seemed he was trying to find the least fault with the haul of leaves. After a while of looking, he raised his head.

“You have a good eye. To be honest, it’s a simple errand, but none of the beggars from before managed to do it.”

“I want the 10 copper.”

Robert rose to his feet and went to the counter. He opened a small box there, and took something out.

“Here’s 10 copper. Next time I run out of Phyllis, I’ll find you.”

“I’ll think about it.”

Taking the money, Mark left the shop.

Author: Lee Gyung Hoon

Mark Chapter 3

Mark Chapter 3: Day and Night

Editor/PR – Kidyeon

Translator – Mr Oranges

Mark left the village after receiving the money. There was no way he could carry around 10 copper so he needed to bury it somewhere. Fortunately, he spotted a suitable tree to use.

Going to that tree, he started digging near the roots. 8 copper were carefully put in the hole and covered up. Mark kept 2 copper to buy bread. He was very hungry, having not eaten anything.

Then he returned into the village, and headed towards the inn. Opening the door, he saw Madam Kate sitting at the counter. She looked leisurely because of no customers.

“Dark bread?”

“Yes. Please give me two.”

“Okay. That’s 2 copper.

Mark took the bread and put forward 2 copper. Fearing that other beggars would steal his bread if they saw, he shoved them inside the waist of his trousers. He decided to eat them in the forest.

As he left the inn, standing in front of him was Jimmy.

“Hey, that’s dark bread right?”

Mark didn’t reply to his question, and was about to turn away.

“You got money from uncle Robert right?”

Hearing those words, he stopped and stared at Jimmy.

“I won’t tell George. Give me some of your bread. I’m so hungry.”

Thinking he looked a little pitiful, after a brief consideration Mark took out one loaf of bread, and broke it into half. The smaller half was given to Jimmy.

“Thanks. I won’t tell.”

Holding the piece of bread, Jimmy ran somewhere else. He was most likely going to a place without people so he could eat alone.

Mark thought that Jimmy might keep asking for bread from now on, but he resolved he wouldn't let him off if he did.

Turning direction, Mark left the village.

Mark was back in the forest. Having eaten the other piece of bread, he was sitting still. The bread was too hard, hurting his teeth. It also made him choke, but he held it in. Going to and back from the well was too bothersome for him. Mark left half a bread to give to Jill.

Sitting on a small rock, he went into thinking. About what he should do from now. There were a few things that were clear to him.

First was to leave this village. He wouldn't be able to advance his prospects by staying in this small place. There was a need to move to a bigger village for the sake of learning magic.

But how would he do that? Mark speculated going alone. To begin with, he didn't know the way. Another problem was the question of safety. It was too dangerous for an eleven year old to be roaming by himself. He might run into wild animals, monsters or even a mugger. This world was a place where normal people would turn into muggers in front of easy prey.

Mark still wasn't ready for that kind of situation, so he gave up on going alone. This being the case, he needed to go with someone else. He remembered about the merchant group. A group of merchants had come to this village, but he hadn't seen them around. It might have been because they were a small group.

Was there a special kind of produce from this village? Mark didn't remember such a thing, and even if there was, there probably wasn't an amount big enough to attract a merchant group. There was no way of making sure so he decided to ask Jill later.

He thought about another problem. It was about Jill whom he was friendly with. Jill staying by herself in this village was worrying, but even so he couldn't take her with him.

Only taking a short moment to think about it, he came to a solution. It was to kill George. The biggest worry about Jill staying there alone was George. As for

Jax, he needed to think about it more.

Mark considered how he would carry out the killing. George frequently went drinking with the money he extorted, and sometimes ended up sleeping in the alleys, completely drunk. He thought to himself that using that moment to stab his eye or throat with something sharp might work. Afterwards, the body would be buried in the mountains. He would do this right before leaving the village. After all, someone suddenly dying in the village would be problematic.

Clearing up his thoughts, Mark stood up to begin practicing magic arrow. A plan was made to get rid of George, but there was no guarantee it would go well. The only method left to him in a sticky situation was his magic. There was a need to raise his skills.

Mark practiced until night time before going back to the village.

A busy week passed.

Contrary to his worries, Jimmy didn't ask for more bread.

Mark carried out Robert's errand twice more for 20 copper. Apart from the money for bread, the rest was buried away.

George didn't come to find him for his payment. According to Jill, George was following Jax around to learn how to hunt. Thanks to that, Mark didn't need to put anymore effort into coming up with the extortion fees. All his time and effort was spent on practicing his magic.

Lately, Mark found using magic to be something fun. He had grown much faster at making the magic seals as well as quickly and accurately chanting the spell. Using magic arrow several times didn't tire him as much as before.

Just the other day, although it was slight, he was beginning to feel the movement of mana when using magic. At that moment, he realized that it was mana.

Today he had also practiced magic, and was now resting. While he was sitting on top of a rock, Jill appeared.

"What are you doing here, Mark?"

"How did you know I was here?"

"Recently you've been going out of the village a lot. That's why I followed in

secret to see where you'd go."

"You can't follow me from next time."

Jill didn't answer and asked something else.

"So what were you doing here? Practicing magic?"

She must have heard the sound of Mark chanting magic. He glanced sideways at her.

"Mhm. It doesn't work no matter how much I practice."

"There's no way Mark could do something I couldn't."

But he had done just that. And easier than expected.

"Right. Oh, did you come after asking him about that?"

"Ah, mister Robert? I asked him."

Jill said that unfortunately, no merchants came to this village. When he asked Jill if there were any villagers going to the bigger villages, she replied that from time to time, uncle Robert did go to sell his leathers. So Mark asked when Robert would go again. Lately, Robert had been acting strangely kind towards Jill.

"He said he'll go next week or so."

"Is that right? I got it."

"But why are you asking about that? Going to follow him?"

Mark thought it was time to tell Jill.

"I'm going to leave this village."

"Why? Why leave. Where will you go?"

"There's nothing to gain from staying in this small village."

"The other villages are the same. At least there are some people that take care of us here."

"Right. And there are people that torment us too."

Mark was thinking of George and Jax as he spoke.

"I want to go as well. Let's go together."

“It’ll be too harsh for a kid.”

“You’re younger than I am.”

“You don’t know how old you are either.”

Jill was taller than Mark. But Jill also didn’t know her own age. She was an orphan after all.

“I’m 12 years old. That’s 1 more than you.”

“I wouldn’t know if I was really 11. You might not be 12 either. Girls are usually taller at a younger age. And I’m just smaller because I didn’t eat well. I could be 12, and you 11.”

“What kind of stupid things are you saying? Being taller means I’m older.”

“Whatever...”

Mark gave up arguing. Standing up, he told Jill.

“Let’s go back.”

“Okay.”

As they returned, Mark thought that he needed to kill George within the week.

During the next three days, Mark was tracking George’s whereabouts. It seemed that George had managed to become friendly with Jax while he was following him around. The other day, George had taken some money from others, but it was most likely to buy drinks with Jax. The two of them usually drank at Jax’s house.

Jax’s residence was in the corner of the village. Judging by its plain appearance, Jax had mostly built it himself. It was better than nothing.

Mark decided to kill the both of them in the coming night. Time went by fast while he made his plans. Even today, the two were drinking in the inn.

In the alley in front of the inn, Mark was waiting for them to come. They had drunk until dawn before coming out. It seemed that Jax was totally drunk because George was helping walk by the shoulder. They were probably heading towards Jax’s house. Mark stalked them from a distance.

On the way, the two fell over a few times. Because of those delays, it was a

while before Jax's house came into sight. Mark saw them going into the house, then went to wait in the area behind the house. Seeing how drunk they were, he assumed it wouldn't be long before they dropped asleep.

He started moving after waiting for 30 minutes. Taking in deep breaths, he slightly opened the door into the house. As expected, the door wasn't locked. There wasn't much room inside, and all sorts of junk was strewn about. Mark looked around the place.

Jax was serious when it came to hunting, and that was why there must have been at the very least a dagger to skin what he hunted. Taking care of his steps, Mark moved slowly. Searching his surroundings, he located a dagger on top of the table.

Moving closer, he picked up the dagger, and slowly made his way towards where the bed was. He then stopped and briefly considered something. George must definitely die. But Jax? Did he have to kill Jax as well? Coming this far, these kinds of thoughts went through his mind. But his hesitation was short lived.

Tightly holding the dagger in a reverse grip, Mark inched closer to George. Pressing the tip of the blade onto George's throat, he pressed hard.

"Kuhhk."

George let out a short cry as he flailed his limbs about. Jax, who was right nearby on the bed, was stabbed similarly.

"Kughh."

Jax clutched his throat as well, making noise. Looking at George again, Mark saw he was grabbing his own neck and shuddering where he laid. It looked like he would die soon. Mark looked back to Jax.

"Ugh!"

Mark fell over rolling backwards. Uprighting his body after he stopped rolling, he looked up. Jax was holding his throat, getting up from the bed with furious eyes. The wound was deadly, but not enough. He would die if left alone, but Mark thought he had to die this instant.

Dropping the dagger onto the floor, he stared at Jax. It was time to see the results of his practice.

“The mana dwelling within me, respond to my calling and destroy my enemy with the force of a hammer, faster than wind: Magic arrow!”

The magic arrow was very fast as it flew forward, hitting Jax hard on the chest. Jax collapsed without making a sound.

For a while, Mark observed the fallen Jax. He was suspicious of whether Jax was just pretending. He waited a little longer, but there was no movement. He was dead.

Stowing the dagger into the waist of his trouser, Mark checked his surroundings. He wanted to take anything that looked useful. Nothing else was on the tables. Looking under the bed, he found a box. Taking out that box, he opened it to see a pouch. Opening it, he found it was full of silver and copper. He stowed that away also.

Mark went to the lamp and flint he had spotted earlier. Striking the flint, he lit the lamp. Grabbing the linen on the floor, he set fire to it. Shortly after holding the flame to the linen, it caught on fire.

He then poured the oil in the lamp onto the bed, afterwards throwing the linen on top. Instantly the bed caught on fire.

Watching the flames burn for only a moment, Mark opened the front door outside just a little to check outside. No one was nearby. Sneaking out, he closed the door behind him.

Only then did he realize that his heart was beating madly.

Trying to calm down his heart, he took deep breaths as he walked away. It was a long night.

Author: Lee Gyung Hoon

Mark Chapter 4

Mark Chapter 4: Robert

Editor/PR – Kidyeon

Translator – Mr Oranges

Mark woke from his sleep. After confirming his surroundings, he saw no one in the alley he had slept in. Everyone must have gone to Jax's house. To check out the atmosphere of the people, he headed out of the alley as well, and at the same time to quench his thirst, headed towards the well.

The air of the village was surprisingly normal, but there was no way that no one found out about the fire set to Jax's house. Mark supposed everyone was too used to death by now.

On the way to the well, he met Jill. She was peeking around the side of some talking women, when they caught each other's eyes.

"Mark! Have you heard about it?"

"About what? I've just woken."

"They say last night Jax's house was set on fire."

"Really?"

Mark showed a surprised face, and threw the bucket into the well. The well pulley made creaking sounds as Jill continued to talk.

"Well did you know? They said that George died as well."

Jill lowered her voice when mentioning George.

"Mark. They say George died."

"I'm listening. How did he die?"

Mark dipped both hands into the bucket and drank water from it. The bucket was too heavy to hold while drinking.

"I heard that Hax and George were getting drunk together. Apparently, while the both of them were sleeping at Jax's house, one of them knocked over an oil lamp."

The water was truly refreshing and delicious to Mark.

“Seeing as the streets are so quiet, everyone must be at Jax’s house?”

“Mhm. Oh right. Just now, Robert said he’d be going.”

“Where?”

“To sell leathers.”

Mark was startled in the middle of his drinking.

“He’s going today? Today when?”

“I don’t know. Mark, are you really going to follow him?”

“Jill, Hang on a moment. I’ll be back in a bit after seeing Robert.”

“Mark!”

Ignoring Jill calling him, he went towards Robert’s shop.

Robert was in the front of his shop, rolling up his leathers and tying them with a string.

“Robert!”

Without looking up from what he was doing, Robert replied.

“What is it.”

For a moment, Mark was speechless. He couldn’t think of how to persuade Robert into going together. But when he saw Robert tying his leathers, an idea floated into his mind.

“Robert. You’re going to sell leathers aren’t you?”

“Right.”

“Won’t the leather be heavy?”

Robert looked bothered by all the talk. Stopping what he was doing and straightening his back, he stared at Mark.

“Did you come to make fun of me.”

“It’s not that but I just wanted to help you out.”

“Help with what?”

“Carrying the leathers. I’ll lend you a hand.”

“There’s no work for you.”

Robert turned away to stoop over his work again. Mark was feeling anxious...

“You should be able to take some more leathers if I helped. You’d be able to sell more at once.”

Robert straightened his back again.

“Why are you doing this.”

“I want to help you, get some coppers while I’m at it, and see what a big village is like.”

Thinking for a moment, Robert grabbed a bundle of leathers, weighing it a few times in his hands.

“How much can you carry.”

“I’ll try holding some.”

Mark took up a bundle of leathers.

“That’s 5 leathers.”

The bundle of leathers was too heavy to carry, and the way he had to hold it was uncomfortable as well.

“Wait for a bit.”

Robert made a shoulder strap out of strings. Lifting the leathers onto his shoulder, Mark felt that although it was easier now, it would still be hard to walk for long.

“How long will it take to get there?”

“3 days.”

“How many hours of walking each day?”

“12 hours.”

“If it’s 4 leathers I think I’ll be fine.”

“Can you really walk while carrying 4?”

“Of course.”

“If you collapse on the way, I’m leaving you behind.”

After just a moment of thinking, Mark replied.

“I think it’ll be okay with 4 leathers. I only want 20 coppers.”

“Alright then.”

Robert had easily agreed, making Mark feel he was too hasty in calling out the price. But he reminded himself that his aim wasn’t to make money.

“We’ll be departing soon, so be back after getting ready.”

“I got it.”

Mark ran out of the village while thinking there were a lot of things to prepare before leaving.

Going to the place where he buried the pouch of money he’d taken from Jax’s house, he dug it back out. From the pouch he took out 2 silvers, and headed back to the village.

The first place Mark visited was old man Roland’s tool shop.

“Hello.”

“Right. What will you buy?”

“Do you have shoes to sell?”

“I do.”

Old man Roland went into the back room of the shop, and it was a long while before he came back out.

“It’s the pair my grandchild used to wear, how about it?”

Taking the shoes into his hands, Mark carefully looked over it.

“Can I try wearing them?”

“Go on.”

Mark took off the cloth wrapped around his feet to try the shoes. It was a little big, but felt useable.

“How much are they?”

“40 coppers.”

“Too expensive. 20 coppers.”

“This kid. That’s made out of rabbit hide. How warm do you think it is?”

“Who would wear these kinds of shoes in this kind of heat?”

“35 coppers.”

“25 coppers.”

“30 coppers. I won’t lower it further.”

“I want to buy a belt too.”

“That’ll be 8 coppers.”

Mark held out 1 silver and old man Roland gave him his change of 62 coppers.

“Good bye now.”

“Come again.”

The second place to go to was the inn.

“Auntie.”

“You came for rye bread?”

“Nope. Do you have beef jerkies?”

Auntie Kate went into the back of the inn and brought out a burlap bag.

“How many do you want?”

“How much for one?”

“2 coppers.”

Peeking inside of the bag, Mark saw the beef looked tempting to eat. It sounded like a fair price.

“Give me 9 please.”

He handed over the coppers.

“By chance, is there a pouch to carry the beef in, and a waterskin?”

From behind the counter, Kate took out a small pouch and a leather waterskin.

“That’s 8 coppers, and 40 coppers.”

“Fill the skin with water please.”

The waterskin was quite expensive, but Mark thought he would have much use for it from here on. Receiving the small pouch, he placed the beef jerkies and remaining coppers inside of it, then hung it on his waist. Going outside, he headed towards Robert’s shop.

Robert was sitting out in front, looking like he was finished preparing.

“Are you ready?”

“Can you wait for a bit?”

After saying that, Mark ran out of the village to where he had buried his money.

He dug out the dagger and pouch full of silvers. The dagger was placed into the waist of his trousers.

Taking out the coppers from the small pouch he bought at the inn, he gathered his money into the other pouch. With the two of these pouches, he went back. Upon seeing Mark holding those two pouches, Robert asked about it.

“What’s in those.”

“Beef jerkies and rye bread.”

Mark shoved in the pouches between the bundle of leathers he would be carrying, then lifted it all onto his back.

“Let’s go now.”

“Alright let’s go.”

On Robert’s back was three large bags, a bow and arrows. A dagger was visible by his waist.

Together with him, Mark left the village. On the way out, Mark had furtively glanced around to see if Jill had come out to bid him farewell, but she couldn’t be seen. She was probably mad. It made Mark feel a little uncomfortable, but he reasoned that since they would part either way, this was fine.

Leaving the village, the two walked a long while without conversation. Mark was feeling like his shoulder would go out, but he resisted the pain. The endless

walk without any talk might have been wearing him out.

So he began talking to Robert.

“Robert.”

“What?”

“What did you do in the past?”

“Why do you ask.”

“Because you seem fit. Were you something like a mercenary?”

“That’s right, I was a mercenary.”

He had given an honest reply. Continuing, Mark asked about various things.

“For how long?”

“4 years.”

“Wow. That’s really long.”

“Then have you seen a lot of monsters?”

“What kind?”

“Well, ones like goblins. Or orcs.”

Mark had put to mouth whatever monster that came to mind.

“Goblins I’ve seen plenty of, and orcs several times too.”

“What were they like?”

“What exactly do you want to know?”

“How dangerous they are. I’m curious about how strong they are.”

After a brief moment of thinking, Robert answered.

“Goblins are small. Between 2 and 3 feet. Their height should reach up to around your chest.”

Seeing as Mark himself was 4 feet tall, it seemed to be about right. Robert continued to talk.

“They’re also on the weak side. But they’re dangerous because they move in packs.”

“Are they dangerous simply because of their numbers?”

“That’s the biggest reason. They usually move around in groups of 10 at the least, 30 at the most. It’s not that difficult for one armed adult to face one goblin. Purely thinking in terms of strength, even three goblins wouldn’t be hard. But it’s not that easy.”

“Why?”

“Goblins use poison darts. Being hit means getting poisoned or paralyzed. Think about it. Will it be so easy to dodge the darts shot by dozens of goblins?”

Mark imagined such a scene happening. It was dreadful.

“Not only that, their teeth are very sharp, as well as the nails on their hands and feet. Some of them even carry weapons. They’re unexpectedly fast, so underestimating them is a peril.”

“I see. Then how were the orcs like?”

“Orcs...”

Robert’s speech slowed to a halt. It was a long time before he spoke again.

“Orcs are truly scary monsters.”

Hearing that, Mark thought that orcs didn’t classify as weak monsters.

“Not even veteran mercenaries can easily deal with orcs. On top of being extremely strong, most of them move around armed. Their weapons are mostly stolen from humans, but just that alone is enough to make them a threat.”

“How strong are they?”

“Barehanded, veterans wouldn’t win.”

“What about experts?”

“Experts aren’t people.”

Mark decided to revise his opinion of orcs. He didn’t expect them to be so fearsome.

“Then how about facing them with magic? Can they be defeated with something like Magic Arrow?”

“It would be difficult with Magic Arrow. Orcs are so tough that they can press forward while being hit. It needs to be at the level of Fire Arrows to give them some damage.”

“Can Magic Arrow be used against goblins?”

“It’ll be hard to kill them with one shot, but it should be possible.”

Robert was surprisingly forthcoming with his answers, so while they walked, Mark continued to ask about everything he was curious about.

The conversation with Robert was an enlightening one. The experience of Robert’s mercenary days were exciting to hear, and informative as well.

The two had walked until night, and Robert had proposed preparing for bed. Lowering his burdens onto the ground, Mark could finally relax. He then looked to see what Robert was doing.

The person in question was taking out two leathers from a bundle. He was rolling up one to use as a pillow, and the other as a blanket. After observing that, Mark did the same.

It was tiring, but sleep didn’t come for Mark.

He thought that he perhaps being too tired preventing him from sleeping.

Mark was shifting restlessly, when he coincidentally looked to the sky.

The stars were especially shining, and the moon appeared so large as to be right in front of him. But rather than feeling appreciation for that beautiful scenery, he was worried instead.

There was no sights as enchanting as this back on earth. It dawned on him more than ever that this was another world.

Many thoughts entered his mind. Mark first wondered about what to do from now, but came up with the answer before long. Regardless of what story he had chosen in that survey, he must first become strong. For that, he needed to learn more magic. Reaching the bigger village should present him with ways to learn magic.

Then he thought about Robert. As a result of all those conversations they had together, Mark viewed him in a much friendlier light. But he forbade himself from letting his guard down. The only one that could be trusted was himself.

Mark tightly hugged the pouch full of silvers, and before long, sleep overcame him.

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Mark Chapter 5

Mark Chapter 5: Class 1 Magic Tome

Editor/PR – Kidyeon

Translator – Mr Oranges

Waking up, Mark felt pain from his shoulder, like it would break off. Sitting upright and looking around him, he saw that Robert was already awake, cutting and eating slices of beef.

The first thing Mark did was to check his belongings. The pouch full of silvers was still there, with no signs of being touched.

“Robert.”

“So you’re awake.”

Mark drank some water from his waterskin, and took out his beef jerkies. He had no real appetite, but there wasn’t much choice since Robert was eating now. If he passed up on this chance, there wouldn’t be time to eat until noon. The beef was much more edible compared to the rye bread. Every chew brought out the flavor of the meat.

Glancing to the side, he saw Robert had finished eating and was staring at him. It wasn’t a demanding look in particular, but Mark got the hint. So he took another swallow of water, and rose to his feet while chewing beef. He hadn’t packed up his things yet, but he could do it while still eating.

Mark strongly dusted the leathers he had used as a pillow and blanket, then tied them back into the bundle with the rest. A sigh came out when he thought of how he would be carrying this and walking again.

The two were starting to move again. Yesterday, Mark was somewhat energetic from the excitement of leaving the village, but today was greatly tiring for him.

Thinking of the conversations he had with Robert the day before, he considered talking to him again, but the atmosphere was strange. Robert looked like he was thinking about something. It was hard to try talking to him in that state, so Mark kept walking in silence.

Just when he thought he couldn't walk anymore, Robert came to a halt, and dropped his luggage to the side of the road.

"I'll be back after some hunting."

After saying that, Robert went into the forest with his bow and arrows. Perhaps it was hard for him to sustain himself on only beef jerky. Mark thought it would be a relief if the reason for Robert's mood today was because of fatigue and hunger.

Mark decided to make a fire so they could cook whatever was hunted right away. Going over to Robert's belongings, he rummaged around and found flint, then gathered rocks and pieces of wood near the road. Placing the rocks in a circle, he put the wood in the middle and lit them on fire, then sat on the ground waiting for Robert.

When quite some time had passed, Robert came out of the forest empty-handed.

"There's not a single rabbit around."

"Might as well eat beef jerky."

Covering the fire with dirt to put it out, Mark then sat and ate his beef. Later in the afternoon, he talked to Robert again. Although Robert wasn't as talkative as yesterday, he did give replies. Chatting while walking made the journey's atmosphere feel lighter.

The sun had set and they had eaten dinner, afterwards continuing to walk further for another long while. They kept moving, and only stopped when it became completely dark. Mark was so tired that he nodded off into sleep the moment he reached his bed. Unlike the last night, he hadn't pondered over anything.

It was the afternoon of the next day, when Robert stopped walking.

"Mark."

"Yes, Robert."

"When you consider what George did to you kids, he did deserve his death. Jax was no different."

Robert was talking as he placed the things he carried down to the ground. Mark got the impression that he shouldn't talk at all right now.

"After waking up yesterday, I went through your things. I figured it out, after seeing the pouch full of silvers and that dagger."

"I see."

"Rather than the fact that you had killed them, I was surprised that you weren't any different from your normal self after killing two people. That's why I considered whether to kill you or not, nipping a potential evil in the bud. I thought about it twice yesterday, in the morning and noon. And now."

Hearing those words, Mark recalled Robert cutting up beef yesterday morning, and the time he had went into the forest armed with his bow. Imagining that Robert was ready all that time to shoot him with an arrow from within the forest, caused a shiver to run down his back.

"To me...yes, let's just say that this is a revenge for Jax. With Jax's death, there is one less hunter who can supply me with leathers. Now tell me why you shouldn't die. And while you're at it, tell me. Before they died, how did George and Jax plead for their lives?"

Robert withdrew the dagger at his waist. The Robert right now did not seem like the owner of a shop, but a frightening mercenary.

"Robert."

Slowly lowering his luggage, Mark spoke out.

"George died without saying a word. Jax...I think he did try to say something."

He remembered how Jax had got up from the bed even though he was wounded.

"At that time, I spoke these words before Jax managed to utter a thing. The mana dwelling within me, respond to my calling and destroy my enemy with the force of a hammer, faster than wind. Magic Arrow!"

The Magic Arrow rapidly burst out and flew towards Robert, but he simply dodged it with a slight twisting movement of his torso.

"I did think that there would be something else you were hiding. Magic huh."

Mark didn't do anything. He knew, that with Robert's skills, he could have thrown his dagger and killed Mark while he was casting the spell. Robert must have purposely waited in order to confirm whether he could really use magic.

"Who did you learn magic from?"

"From old man Cain. I paid 5 coppers for it."

"When did you learn it."

"It was about 2 weeks ago."

"2 weeks?"

Robert looked slightly surprised.

"Did you kill them to learn magic. Because you needed money?"

"I didn't kill them for the money. I found the money pouch after killing them, when I searched to see if there was anything useful to take. After all, won't I need alot of money to learn more magic? But the biggest reason I killed George and Jax was because of Jill."

"Yes. Jill was the person I was closest to in the village. I was determined to go to a bigger village so I could learn magic. But then Jill would be all alone. I worried for Jill, so I had to get rid of the threats. And to be honest, George and Jax were beginning to eye her strangely at that time."

Robert had quietly listened until everything was said. Then, putting away his dagger, he heaved his luggage onto his back, and began walking. It seemed that for now, that was the end of it.

The two had walked without words for a lengthy period of time, when a large village began coming into their sights. Arriving at the entrance of the village, the guard soldier called out to Robert.

"Robert, it's been a while."

"Yeah. Let's have a drink after I sell my leathers."

The two were apparently quite well acquainted.

"Sounds good. Who's the child?"

"Ah. A kid from my neighborhood. He said he wanted to see what a big village

was like, so I brought him along.”

“Alright.”

Entering the village, Mark followed behind Robert for a good long way, until they arrived in front of a certain shop.

“This is as far as we go.”

At those words, Mark placed the bundle of leathers he was carrying onto the ground.

“It was good working with you.”

“You’re going to go?”

“Yes.

“Okay.”

There was a long pause before Robert opened his mouth again.

“I’ll take care of Jill, so don’t worry about her.”

“...Please be good to her.”

Mark thought that Robert was a better choice compared to most others. There wasn’t a lot of paths that an orphan girl could take. If Robert took care of Jill, then there wouldn’t be any problems for her well-being. Although there was a large age difference between them, it was best to not mention that. Robert turned away, intending to enter the shop.

“Robert. What about the 20 coppers?”

Without turning back, he replied back.

“I’ll buy Jill something tasty to eat with that money.”

And he went into the shop just like that.

Mark was feeling somewhat light-hearted. Finally, he had taken a step forward in his life. Since he now had money, he wanted to stay at an inn. Following the street straight up, he spotted an inn and entered it.

“Welcome.”

“Hello. One room please. And ready the bath as well.”

“That will be 15 coppers.”

Mark paid the money and was led to his room. There, he spread out his money pouch. The reason he wanted to stay at an inn, was to safely count his money.

“38 silvers and 12 coppers.”

That was everything in the pouch. Mark wondered what to do with this money. But before he could think for long, the bath was ready to be used.

Sinking his body into the warm water, Mark felt alive for the first time in a while. He was in the water for only mere moments before it became dirty. Although Mark wanted to wash one more time, he had something to do before the sun set, so he got out and dried his body.

Leaving the room, he went to the counter at the front of the inn.

“Please clear the water in my room.”

“Yes, I’ll be on it.”

First of all, Mark wanted new clothes. Finding his way to a clothes shop, he bought a shirt and a pair of pants for 80 coppers. Next, he found a bookstore. Mark asked the owner if there were any magic tomes in the place, but the owner told him that they would only be found at the magic store.

Exiting the bookstore, Mark tried asking the passing people for directions, and made his way to the magic store.

“Hello.”

“Come in.”

At first glance, Mark felt that the owner had the look of a magician. He was wearing a black robe, and had a white beard to go with it.

“I want to buy a magic tome.”

“Do you have the money?”

“I do have a bit of it.”

The owner laughed, showing his teeth.

“What should I bring you.”

“Are there any books on basic magic theory?”

“There are.”

After answering in the affirmative, the owner took out a book from among the shelves. It looked to be a book with around 100 pages.

“It’s 4 silvers.”

Expensive. But Mark needed to know the basic theories of magic, so he made the payment.

“There’s something else I want to know about.”

“What is it?”

Perhaps it was because a book had sold, but the owner looked as if he would tell him anything.

“Can you tell me what class Alarm Magic is?”

“There are many different varieties of spells in Alarm Magic. What kind are you curious about?”

“What are the different kinds to it?”

“Well, there is the most basic form of Alarm Magic, which sounds an alarm in response to intruders, and then there is the spell that makes noise when someone touches an item you cast the magic on. There is even the type that only alerts the caster.”

The owner was like a teacher, explaining in detail.

“I want to know the kind of spell that sounds an alarm when an intruder comes nearby when I’m camping outside in the night.”

“That spell would be class 1. Class 1 magics aren’t sold separately.”

Browsing the shelves for a moment, the owner took out another book.

“This is a class one magic tome which contains Alarm Magic. If you want to learn that magic, I recommend buying this book. It even has quite a few of other class 1 magics.”

“What other kinds are in there?”

“Let me see.”

The owner opened the book, seemingly looking at the index.

“Wind. Daze. Alarm. Light...in total, there are 12 kinds of magic included in this book.”

Although he heard the names of the different kinds of magics, Mark couldn't really tell them apart. But since the owner said they were class 1 magic, it would be good to learn them.

“Are you going to buy it?”

“Can I have a look?”

“Sure.”

Mark didn't know how to read, but he wanted to see it anyway. He looked through the book, lightly turning the pages. Half the contents were written in words while the rest were illustrations.

“How much is it?”

“20 silvers.”

It was a tremendous price. But Mark couldn't not buy it. Paying for that book left him with 13 silvers and 32 coppers. Although his money pouch had become much lighter, the weighty feel of that magic tome made him a little excited. Mark felt as if he had already learned every magic the book contained.

“Come again.”

The owner looked outwardly happy due to having sold an expensive magic tome.

Coming out of the magic store, Mark continued to move his feet. There was a final destination left to go. It was the mercenary guild.

“Welcome. How may I help you?”

“I want to put in a request.”

A young female employee had welcomed him inside with a smile. Judging by the name of the guild, Mark had expected tough, wild men to be taking the requests, but he was surprisingly wrong. Perhaps it was a business tactic, he

thought to himself.

“What kind of request would you like to make?”

“I’m looking for someone who can teach reading and writing. The student will be me. As for the fee, I’ll pay 50 coppers per month. The period of the request will be 3 hours a session, twice a week for 3 months. I’ll be using a book on basic magic theory for the teaching material.”

“I understand. The registration fee will be 10 coppers. How shall we contact you?”

“I’ll be at an inn not far from the village square. The roof of the building is red, and there’s a tool shop right next to it.”

“Ah, you must be talking about the Beer With You inn.”

Mark didn’t expect such a name for the inn.

“Yes. All you have to do is look for Mark in that place.”

“Understood.”

After giving his reply, Mark left the mercenary guild building.

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Mark Chapter 6

Mark Chapter 6: Julie

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It had been over two days since Mark was staying at the inn. During that time, he had paid a little more money so he could move to a room with windows. Mark had spent his time reading the magic tome with the help of sunlight. Since he couldn't read, instead he had tried memorizing the shape of the written words and the drawings of magic seal movements.

When his eyes hurt, he practiced Magic Arrow. Whenever he used magic, he cast it through the open window, facing the sky. He also practiced making the magic seals with both of his hands.

Mark had eaten lunch in the hallroom and returned to his room to continue reading the magic tome, when someone came knocking on his door.

"Who is it?"

"I've come from the mercenary guild."

It was the voice of a young girl. Opening the door, Mark saw that it was indeed a young girl, but with a childlike face.

"You are Mr. Mark?"

"Yes, I am."

Opening the door, he let the girl into his room. Sitting on the floor, they talked. The name of the girl was Julie, and said that she was 17 years old. Apparently, from a young age she had a vested interest in magic.

She was born in a rather wealthy family, and so she was given an expensive education. But some years ago, her father was attacked and killed by monsters while on business trip, and after that, the family shop was ruined. And so Mark was told, that was the reason why she was now working at a grain store.

"If you're capable of using magic, why don't you teach magic for a living instead?"

“I do know of various magic, but the ones I can actually use are only Light and Wind. I can’t quite use the other magic well...”

Mark asked her to show him her magic.

Complying, Julie closed her eyes, concentrating as she chanted the spell and slowly drew the magic seal with her hand. The moment she cried out the final words of the spell, a white light formed near her chest. The light gently floated upwards, stopping above her head. Amazed, Mark kept staring into the light. It disappeared after about 5 minutes.

Once more she began chanting a spell, and this time she produced a slight blowing wind. It was straightforward. Light magic was a magic that created light, and Wind magic, was one that blew wind. Mark committed it to his memories. But the wind cast by Julie didn’t last very long.

“Does the wind usually disappear so quickly?”

“It’s not like that. It depends on the caster.”

Through the conversations he had with her, Mark concluded that Julie was well-qualified to teach him to read. Due to her work at the grain store in the day, she said she could teach him how to read and write in the night. But learning at night would incur extra expenses from having to use candles, so in return, Mark requested that she answer any questions regarding magic that she knew about. She readily agreed.

From then on, Mark learned to recognize written words.

The first night, he had to learn in a stooped position on the floor while the room was lit with a candle. Finding it too uncomfortable, Mark paid the inn owner to borrow a table for the times he spent learning at night. But again, he found it too inconvenient to learn just by sight, so he bought a tool meant for learning to write from the nearby tool shop.

The item he bought was a light-weight square wooden board with raised edges so as to contain dirt. For pens, he broke off two twigs from the tree near the inn, which would be used to draw characters in the dirt.

Each learning session, two hours was spent on reading and writing, while the remaining 1 hour was used to ask Julie questions about magic. They were using the book on basic magic theory to learn reading, so the questions on magic

popped up in Mark's head then and there during the lessons.

"Does mana reside in the blood?"

"That theory is the most well known."

"Was it proven with certain evidence?"

"I've heard that one magician had experimented on it. That person had slowly let out his blood while using magic."

"So what happened then?"

"The magician became dizzy from bleeding too much and couldn't use any more magic. And in the end, that person wasn't sure of whether he couldn't use magic from the dizziness of blood loss, or because the amount of mana was reduced along with the blood."

"What do you think about it Julie?"

"I think that mana is definitely in the blood."

"Why do you think so?"

"Did you know that when there's no magic powder to use on magic circles, blood is used as replacement? The fact that blood can substitute magic powder is proof in itself."

Nodding in agreement, Mark thought that Julie was much smarter than that experimenting magician.

"Is mana generated from the moon?"

"Yes. It's the reason why at night, the surrounding mana overflows."

"I can't really feel it though."

"I can't sense the difference either. But it's certain that magic is much easier to use when night falls."

Julie used Alarm magic as an example.

"As a matter of fact, the difficulty and mana consumption of Alarm magic is on the level of class 2 magic. But because the magic has a distinct use for night times, it is known to have high success rates. That's why I believe it is classified

as a class 1 magic. Try using magic in the day and then at night, and you will clearly feel the difference. Of course, if that doesn't work, then you might as well forget about it."

Mark quickly wanted to learn other magic. The kind of magic you could practice inside his room. Some kinds of offensive magic would require a certain amount of space to practice.

While reading the book on magic theory, Mark came to know a new truth. When using magic, the incantation and magic seal wasn't something absolutely necessary. It was written that spell incantations are meant to assist in defining a clearer image of the magic, while drawing magic seals is an action to help move the mana within the body.

"Julie."

"Yes, Mark."

"There's something I'm curious about spells and magic seals."

"What is it you want to know?"

"It's written in this book that incantations are meant to help form an image of the magic in your mind. Then if you were able to clearly imagine the magic by yourself, would the incantation become unnecessary?"

"That's right. Incantations aren't absolute. But there probably aren't many magicians who are capable of doing that. Imagination is extremely important in the art of magic. A certain magician said this. A magician envisions, and mana brings that visualization to life. Indeed, incantations are meant to help your imagination."

"Then if incantations purpose is to help create an image, is there a need to always stick to the same one? The way that people picture magic in their minds must all be different."

"As you say, there are more than one variation of incantations. But it's said that there are a few set rules to them. Like how certain words must be included in the chant. And the spells that are universally used have had their incantations standardized through the collective research of many magicians. There is a good reason for why so many people would use the same incantation for a spell."

Julie's explanation was convincing to Mark.

"What kind of role do magic seals have?"

"History tells us that the magicians of the past had remarkable imaginative abilities, as well as a great affinity towards mana. Those magicians were able to use magic just by thinking of the spell."

"That's amazing."

"Isn't it? But there's a limit to how much you can direct mana with just your thoughts. Because it wasn't easy for the magicians of the past to manipulate their mana with only their thoughts, it took them longer to cast their magic. That's why they invented the magic seals from observing the movements of mana. These magic seals are what help you to smoothly direct your mana."

Mark was curious as to how magic seals helped to guide mana. He asked Julie, but she replied that she also didn't know. She continued speaking.

"In reality, there is more than one form to magic. Do you remember the Light magic I showed you? Didn't the ball of light slowly float to above my head after appearing?"

"Yes, I remember."

"There are actually more ways to use that magic. One way is to create a light that slowly moves forward, and another is to create it right by that wall over there. All these methods require a different movement of the mana."

"If that's true...then does it mean that the magic seal changes according to the usage of magic?"

"Naturally. That's why it takes a long time to learn one type of magic."

To think that you needed to remember all those complex hand signs for each different way of using magic! Mark suddenly felt his head ache.

"As of the present, is there no way of using magic without making the magic seals?"

"I've heard that some high ranked magicians are capable of casting magic with only the name of the spell, omitting the incantations and magic seals."

“Is it only possible for those high ranked magicians?”

“I don’t really know further than that.”

Seeing Julie answer all his questions so well, Mark had momentarily thought that she would know everything.

“The section about magic variations will come out near the end of the book, so when the time comes I’ll teach you all about it in detail.”

“Yes, Julie.”

After Julie left at the end of his lesson, Mark set about to practice casting Magic Arrow. He thought to himself, that if incantations and magic seals weren’t absolute, then activating magic without either one should be possible.

Right after opening the window in his room, he began using his magic. Chanting the spell as slowly as possible, he tried sensing the movements of mana.

“The mana dwelling within me, respond to my calling and destroy my enemy with the force of a hammer, faster than wind.”

It was faint, but he could definitely feel the mana shifting.

“Magic Arrow!”

Mark had shouted out the spell name, but it didn’t activate. He continued practicing several more times before giving up. This time, he decided to try it the opposite way. He would omit the incantation and only make the magic seals.

Closing his eyes, Mark imagined the form of Magic Arrow in his mind. Slowly, he moved his hands to draw the seals. This time, he could feel the mana stirring around him more clearly.

“Magic Arrow!”

To his surprise, a Magic Arrow burst out flying towards the sky. It was a success!

Afterwards, he tried other ways of casting the magic, such as slowly drawing the magic seals with his eyes open, and quickly drawing the seals with his eyes closed. At times, he failed, and in others, he succeeded. More practice was

needed.

Practicing deep into the night, it was a while before Mark fell asleep.

Having used Magic Arrow too many times, Mark became bored of it and wanted to try other magic. He quickly wanted to learn to read so as to start reading from the class 1 magic tome. That was why, even outside of his lessons with Julie, he spent effort into memorizing the characters in the book.

In this way, a month had passed and Mark completely learned every character. He already knew the words, so now that he knew the characters, the books were easy to read.

Mark didn't expect that he would learning to read so quickly. There was still 2 months left for Julie to teach, and it seemed problematic to end the lessons right now.

So he made a suggestion to Julie. Since he had learned to read, why not spend the remaining 2 months on learning magic? There was still over half of the magic theory book to go through, and the book itself contained quite the vague explanations.

That is why Mark asked her to help by explaining to him the things he couldn't figure out while reading, and with practicing magic as well. Although Julie only knew how to use Wind and Light magic, but she was undeniably well-informed in regards to magic theory.

Laughing happily, Julie agreed.

Now that he could read, Mark earnestly began advancing his knowledge of magic. He spread open the class 1 magic tome. It contained the following magic: Light, Armor, Magic Arrow, Wind, Fire, Cold, Sharp, Daze, Alarm, Cat's Ear, Warm, Compass. A total of 12.

He chose to first learn Alarm. The reason was because of the conversations he had with Robert on the way to this village. When Robert told him about his mercenary days, he had also told Mark a few things about the magicians he came across. The roles given to magicians, and the kind of magic they would use.

The most commonly used was Alarm magic. It was a magic that would sound an alarm in response to intruders. Magicians were eagerly welcomed because Alarm magic could rid the need of a night watch.

It was something he had considered before, but learning magic did indeed cost a lot of money. Mark didn't know how much a class 2 magic tome would be, but it would surely cost more than 20 silvers.

He decided, it would be a good idea to earn more money by becoming a mercenary.

Now that he was a magician, he wanted to make money by making use of his magic.

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Mark Chapter 7

Novel Hosting Areas.

I'm doing an update post to let people know some things, as I see quite a lot of people reading SS (Swallowed Star), LOTD (Law of the Devil), and AMO (A Martial Odyssey). I'm also doing this post, for those that don't already know, for

Mar 06, 2016 by [Kidyeon](#) in [A Martial Odyssey](#)

Mark Chapter 8

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Mark Chapter 9

[Novel Hosting Areas.](#)

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